

NEXT STEPS TOWARD PEACE

an address by

Daniel Ellsberg

Delivered at the Montclair Presbyterian Church, Oakland, California

2:30 PM, March 21, 1981 at the Annual Meeting of the

West Coast Churches for Peace and Justice  
(Now Northern California Presbyterians for Peace and Justice)



### NEXT STEPS TOWARD PEACE

Duke Robinson, a member of the Steering Committee of the WCCPJ and pastor of the Montclair Presbyterian Church introduces Daniel Ellsberg:

We know the name Daniel Ellsberg from years ago when it frequently appeared in headlines and on newscasts, particularly with regard to what became known as the Pentagon papers. Let me refresh your memories.

During the 1950's and 60's, after earning three degrees at Harvard, Daniel Ellsberg worked for the Rand Corporation in Santa Monica, with much of his time spent in direct consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the White House as a specialist on Strategic Nuclear Weapons. This work gave him access to top secret information. By that access he came to the knowledge that our government was lying to the public. Daniel Ellsberg found himself in an acute moral crisis. In that crisis, he did a very strange thing: he told the truth. And telling the truth got Daniel Ellsberg in trouble; President Nixon and his aides tried very hard to discredit him. And that got President Nixon and his aides in trouble.

Jewish author Elie Wiesel, speaking in Berkeley recently, said that the Bible's true prophet, often at great personal risk, tells of destruction to come if the nation continues its present path. The false prophet tells the people, "everything is all right." Now, the true prophet's task is to so tell the truth that the nation will change its ways and in the end it will be the false prophet who turns out to be correct. Daniel Ellsberg, we hope you will continue to tell the truth.

Who's Who in America, after noting that Daniel Ellsberg served three years in the United States Marine Corps, mainly lists the many peace awards he has been given; the Gandhi Award, the Eleanor Roosevelt Award, several others. One is conspicuously missing; I cannot help wondering where the Nobel people have been.

Professors and preachers are known for repeating themselves. I had a professor 25 years ago who every other day would say that often the human problem is not a lack of knowledge, but the moral courage to act upon the knowledge we already have. Our country needs heroes today, people of moral courage who tell the truth and act upon it. I have a candidate in mind. And I present to you for your careful hearing, Daniel Ellsberg.



## NEXT STEPS TOWARD PEACE

by Daniel Ellsberg

Thank you very much.

Certainly one thing at least was right in that very unusually glowing introduction. There was a time in my life when I faced a real challenge as to whether I should change the pattern of my life. It came after 15 years of serving the executive branch in a variety of capacities that made me think of myself as one of those "President's men" as described, indeed, in All the President's Men.

The Marines think of themselves as Presidential guards to be used as the commander-in-chief sees fit. And it seemed to me that the elite education that I had had prepared me for nothing higher than the opportunity and privilege of serving the President of the United States, and telling him the truth; doing my best to find the reality of our international situation and our alternatives and to tell that to the one who was in charge and who had the responsibility.

There came a time then when I was challenged to question whether that was really the best way I could use my knowledge, my education and my up-bringing in the service of my country and of other humans; to ask myself whether there weren't other loyalties that were in conflict with that and might possibly be higher.

I'm very glad to have the opportunity to speak to people with a church identification. What brings us together here today is the problem that I've been speaking about continuously for nearly six years now - and that meant going back to the subject of my earlier preoccupation - the avoidance of thermonuclear war under any conditions, and the reduction of the risk that it poses to humanity.

I feel that we will not reduce that risk, let alone eliminate it, without very great changes in this society, as a leader of the global society, making changes in such fundamental social aspects as structure, behavior, and attitudes. We need radical changes; we will need to go to the roots of our sense of ourselves as citizens, as brothers and sisters, if we are to reduce the enormous and urgent risks that we are facing. I come back to the point - this country will have to be very early, if not the leader, in that change. And the recognition that I came to with such anguish and late in life, is that we as a nation will not be led in that process of change by the man we have chosen, or who has somehow been chosen for us as president of the United States. On the contrary, we would somehow have to be dragging the presidents along. And that means a change in the behavior of a large number of people in this country in the way that I changed, in the way of discovering a basis for patriotic dissent, with a freedom for acting as a sovereign



public, instead of as an uninformed and passive set of obedient compliant followers. And that indeed would be a radical change, not only politically for people, but psychologically in their sense of relation to their country and to the president, and in their sense of themselves and their responsibilities.

I think that the risks that are involved in opposing presidential policy are large: the risk to one's career, to one's sense of one's-self, to one's relations to other people; and these risks are real, especially for people early in the process. The costs are real - and these risks and costs will not be undertaken by people who haven't changed. Here is my hope: that people need not so much to change in their moral values, their basic principles of what is right, but in their sense of their duty to act on their principles as free and autonomous beings, to act committedly. They will have to see this as a moral challenge in a crisis. It's hard to believe that large numbers of people will come to that recognition without church leadership by mainline Christian churches. It is hard for me to believe, in other words, that people will face this as a moral problem against their churches, as well as against the executive branch of their government. Yet that means that there must be change in the stance of the churches as well.

I think there is an inertial policy in the institutions that are closest to the executive branch in this country that makes it quite unlikely that they will make needed changes, without being essentially pressed to do so by strong political movements. There is, of course, the hope that religious feelings historically have been a source of strength for people who have been called to confront secular authority. More often, as we know, the churches have been in line with secular authority and have reinforced the prescriptions of secular authority of any kind. It was true in Hitler's Germany, as in any other country you could name, and it's true, of course, of the churches to which most of us belong.

And it's true right now. The policies that I'm going to describe critically are policies that the churches have underwritten. I'm talking now of Jewish and Christian leaders almost across the board. With the exception of those in the historic so-called Peace Churches; they have accepted the roles that have been those of main-line Christianity since Constantine: chaplains of the empire, sustainers of the state, supporters of obedience to authority wherever it leads. And I'm saying that today authority is leading us in a direction that is catastrophic physically, socially, in every way you could think of, and distinctly morally. That is, if one can imagine a split between the morality of the state and the morality of churches, the morality of private conscience. Surely we've all been brought up to imagine the conceivability of such a split. We just haven't experienced such a struggle in our lifetime very much, nor in our parents' lifetime.

I'm saying that if our society is to be converted from a militaristic course, from a build-up and use of nuclear weapons,



the churches will have to be converted. And a whole lot of individuals will have to lead the way on that.

I was asked really, by Duke, to emphasize something quite different; just what should we do as citizens? That, of course, is something of great concern to me. To make sure that I don't go on so long that I never get to that, I'll mention some things right at the beginning, some aspects of this problem confronting us that I do not expect will be familiar to most of you, even though you are a select audience in terms of your information and concern. It's my experience that even such people tend not to be familiar with certain very important aspects of our history and current policies which I happen to know, because they were secret when I was involved in the process. That's the part I want to press, because I think it's precisely some of these aspects that pose the moral problem differently and make it more urgent than it would seem otherwise.

In terms of what to do then, I'll just say very briefly something about an alternative proposal to the arms race we are now following in our government and have followed for the last generation. It has the potential, I think, for a very powerfully supported initiative by this country. It is very simply a proposal for a bilateral U.S. and Soviet "freeze," or moratorium, on the production, deployment and testing of any additional nuclear warheads of any sort, or of vehicles intended primarily for the delivery of nuclear warheads. Such a freeze would apply on the Russian side, to their further mirving of their missiles, many of which are not yet adapted to multiple warheads for a single launcher. Many of their missiles are not adapted up to the limit permitted by SALT II, if that should hold, which is ten warheads per missile. If SALT II is not ratified, many of the missiles could hold up to forty warheads, making even the MX deployment proposal totally vulnerable.

Neither Carter nor Reagan has proposed a way of stopping the Russians from adding any more warheads to their existing missiles. They've accepted, essentially, more Russian mirving - in the acceptance of the fact that it makes not only Minutemen missiles vulnerable to Russian missiles, but could make even the MX vulnerable before it's ever deployed at the cost of hundreds of billions of dollars.

I know of no conceivable way of preventing the Soviet Union from doing that, other than at the price of ourselves foregoing new testing, deployment and production of additional missiles and warheads. That price would not seem a high one to a country like ours that has currently 10,000 strategic warheads to the Russians 7,000. The Russians' 7,000 will be 10,000 or 12,000 within a few years if SALT II is not ratified and, indeed, even if SALT II is ratified, which shows the limitations of what SALT II does do for us. This proposal seeks to stop the Russians where they are at 7,000 strategic warheads and to stop us at 10,000. We have in addition to our 10,000 strategic warheads, some 22,000 so-called tactical warheads, which average the size of the Hiroshima warhead.



The Russians have some 15,000. This would leave us then with larger numbers of warheads, though many of their warheads are larger than the ones we've chosen to have because their missiles are less accurate.

The mutual "freeze," then, would be a strong change from our current policy, and is one that none of our Presidents has ever shown any willingness to accept.

Most Americans, I think, believe that the arms race continues despite the fact that we have made the proposal to stop the arms race many times and the Russians have rejected it. That is exactly wrong. It is the Russians who have repeatedly proposed such comprehensive stopping, and it is we who have always rejected it before because we were far ahead in numbers, even farther than we are now, farther from every point of view. And we want to get still farther ahead now because we are about equal in overall comparisons. It was the intention of the Carter administration in its later years, and is now that of the Reagan administration, to regain the kind of superiority we once had. Our policy, in short, continues to be dominated by powerful men, in and out of government, civilian as well as military, who believe that the United States must have superiority of nuclear weapons. This, of course, perpetuates the arms race if the Russians are no longer willing to accept the inferiority they had in its first 20 years. The Russians worked very hard, spent an enormous amount of money - more than we have in the last decade - in order to remove that earlier superiority on our part and to achieve a kind of parity in destructive power. They seem determined to continue that so long as our proposal is to be superior, which is increasingly explicit in the Reagan administration.

The MX, the Titan, the Cruise missiles would give us actual functional superiority and that is what they are meant to do. They would, if the Russians stood still. That seems, in fact, very unlikely, unless we run the Russians out of money. It does not seem clear at this point, with our economic problems, that we will run them out of money before the race runs us out of money. But that seems to be the notion. If in fact they do match us, which they have the power to do, the situation will not be changed in terms of superiority, it will still be a parity at a much higher level of destructiveness on both sides. That seems a likely consequence, but one which the people backing this policy are willing to accept.

If the Russians were offered a mutual freeze proposal it would test their willingness for the first time to do what they said they wanted to do in the past. They might or might not accept it. If they accepted and cheated, they would be found out; that is agreed to essentially by all - the people who oppose SALT II, the people who are for it - all agree that cheating on any significant scale would be discovered by our Satellite reconnaissance and electronic means. So the Russians would have two choices; they could



reject our proposal and continue the arms race with us, increasing their inventory together with ours, or they could accept our proposal and stop with us. I am trusting the Russians, I think, no more than they deserve, which is simply trusting them to want to survive in the longer run and not to want to spend hundreds of billions of dollars that do not improve their security but rather decrease it. They have strong incentive to accept such a proposal. They may not; in which case - as I think we all know, and Reagan knows - the arms race continues and we have, no doubt, some further opportunities. But some day they may all run out. It would seem to me possible that we will not survive the process that started with Hiroshima.

That, by the way, raises almost theological questions; not just moral ones. Is it really possible for a Christian to take seriously the possibility that humanity will end itself this way? I have to say that I do take that possibility seriously. I think that a theology that would make that impossible needs re-examination. More on that later.

The mutual "freeze" is one proposal no president will offer without public pressure.

Secondly, and for reasons that I'll come to, very important I think, is a "no-first-use" commitment on our part; a commitment that under no circumstances would the United States initiate nuclear war - under any circumstances at all. Again, sincerely or not, the Russians have proposed such a measure as a bilateral commitment a number of times. I say, sincerely or not. We've never tested that sincerity, since each president has directly refused to make such a commitment and has on the contrary, expressed in each term, our committed willingness to initiate nuclear war.

Most Americans that I've encountered over the last five years, and I've asked a lot of large audiences, believe that our policy is one of no-first-use of nuclear weapons. And that's wrong, as most of you know. Specifically, our NATO policy was based from the very beginning, in 1949 and 50, on a commitment to initiate strategic nuclear war; that is, long range war against the homeland of the Soviet Union. From the very beginning, Strategic Air Command was set up to deliver strategic weapons - that is weapons designed for long range delivery which tend to be larger than tactical or short range weapons. We were to deliver those weapons, atomic weapons, on the Soviet Union in about 1946 or 47; in a time when the Soviet Union not only did not have any atomic weapons, but was not expected by President Truman to have them for 20 years, if ever.

Truman had a private conviction, by the way, for reasons that have been revealed for the first time, thanks to the classified documents in a remarkably good book by Greg Herken, a professor at Yale, called The Winning Weapon. He gives, at last, the reason why Truman took a position that absolutely baffled Oppenheimer, the so-called "father of the Atom Bomb." When Truman said it was his belief that the Russians would never get the weapon, Oppenheimer



reported this to other people as evidence of a kind of an invincible ignorance, an insuperable obscurantism, in Truman. Herken gives the reason why all our government leaders essentially believed Truman, because they knew something that Oppenheimer didn't know. They knew a secret; it was the secret of the atom bomb. This was a paradoxical idea, since the physicist had the impression that there was no secret to the atom bomb. The secret that assured our leadership that the Russians would not get a bomb for decades was that we had bought up, during the war, secretly, 97% of all the known uranium and thorium reserves in the world. And it was so secret that Oppenheimer himself, who was head of the Manhattan Project, did not know that. Truman also believed, incorrectly, that Russia had no uranium or thorium. The impact of that is that they were led to believe that we alone would have the bomb for a long time. The Russians would know how to build one, but they wouldn't be able to do it. They would have low-grade uranium and thorium, but the problem would be to refine that in such a way as to make a bomb, and that seemed to be a technical problem that would take a very long time to solve.

I come back to my earlier point. The earliest postwar conception of what nuclear weapons were for, was to use them on a country known not to have them: Russia. When I mentioned this the other day, a professor of history actually said, "Well, are you suggesting that the United States would use--actually use nuclear weapons on a country that did not have them?" (You're laughing. And I laughed.) I said, "Well, that's how Harry Truman did use them," and he was startled by this. He said -- this was at Santa Cruz -- "Well, that was during a war." I said, "Well, that's really what I'm talking about - I wasn't suggesting it would be done as a covert operation of some kind." Again, one could laugh. But I think it is most Americans' belief, nevertheless, that somehow after the shock of Hiroshima this is a weapon to be used only in the most transcendent of political purposes, like ending a Second World War, saving perhaps a million casualties, which is how Truman presented it, and which is a purpose where it at least deserves consideration, but for no other. Specifically, I think most Americans believe that the nuclear weapons are primarily, if not exclusively, to deter nuclear attack on ourselves or our closest allies.

The Soviet Union exploded a nuclear device in 1949. It is important to know too, and this again was classified until very recently, our estimate retrospectively is that the Soviets had no operational weapons until the early 50's. As late as 1952 and '53, they had no weapons ready for delivery. Which, by the way, as Herken points out, was the same way we were for some years after developing the atom bomb; we had no weapons after the war. They were not actually assembled for quite a while. Nevertheless, we did have what the Russians didn't have, which is an ability to deliver those weapons from very early on by strategic bombers, which we kept developing and improving. It really wasn't until quite late in



the game, the late 1950's, that the Russians developed any significant number of long range strategic bombers capable of delivering these weapons to the United States.

And now - another secret, and a very important one; I'm declassifying for you a top secret, indeed. But 20 years later, I think it's not too early for you to know how many missiles the Russians actually had in the year of the Berlin crisis - 1961, a year in which Kennedy, you will remember, warned us of the need for fallout shelters by the end of the year and encouraged private enterprise on that subject. How many remember that? I was working in the Pentagon at that time. Kennedy, a year earlier, had won narrowly as President, largely on the grounds that Eisenhower had neglected our security to the point that the Russians could be expected to have a much larger number of missiles than we did in 1961, enough to wipe out our strategic retaliatory capability.

In response to earlier warnings of that sort, a "bomber gap" in the early 1950's - then later the missile gap starting in the late 50's - we ourselves had built 3,000 bombers, capable of dropping thermonuclear weapons on Russia, 2,000 inter-continental bombers and about 1,000 that could hit Russia from overseas bases and carriers of a sort that Russia didn't have at all. We had, in 1961, some 40 ICBM's. The Russians were predicted to have perhaps 300, or at least 150 or so, with some people predicting that they then had as many as 1,000. That was the official estimate of the Commander of SAC, General Thomas Power; 1,000 to our 40. Of course, we had the bombers. They were known to have only 190 odd bombers to our 3,000. But as many as 50 Russian ICBM's, let alone 150 or 300 would have been a significant force against our small number of strategic air command bases - we had 26 major bases in the country. So even 50 is two missiles per base. If you look at histories now, written 20 years later, of what happened to the missile gap, you will see in nearly all of them, on all sides of the political spectrum, agreement on the figure which they got from the Pentagon that what the Russians turned out to have was not 150 - not 1,000, but about 50 to our 40. So there was no missile gap.

But what the Russians really had was then, and is now, top secret - and I will tell you what it was. They had 4 ICBMs. Now that's different from 50, by what they call at Rand, an order of magnitude, a factor of 10. But Thomas Power, the Commander of SAC, was off by 250 times - not 250% - 250 times.

Power and the others who had led to that mis-estimate, were never embarrassed by it, and certainly didn't investigate how they had come to make this error, because they knew exactly how and why they had come to make this error. They knew very well it was a lie and hoax. It did, however, achieve the build-up in both bombers and ultimately missiles that they felt was necessary for superiority - enormous superiority.



Note that 4 Russian missiles, at that time on one base, capable of being destroyed by a single raid with high explosives, defined a condition then in which we were not just "superior." We had a monopoly of strategic nuclear power; we were the only super power capable of launching significant attack on the homeland of the other super power. And that was true essentially by Russian choice since everyone has agreed ever since that they had the technical capability had they wanted to spend the money, to have matched or exceeded us. They chose not to do it for over 16 years into the nuclear era. And that bears, by the way, on the certainty and credibility of the people who are telling us today that the Russians are and will be making every conceivable physical effort to achieve a decisive superiority over us. These are not "just like the ones" who told us that 20 years ago; they are the very same people in many cases. Paul Nitze, for example, was my boss at that time. I believe they are as consciously deceptive today in their warnings of eminent Russian superiority as they were then. They are deceiving us not for narrow self interest, but for our own good; they are deceiving us to the same good end as then - to encourage us to buy what the public would not otherwise buy, enormous numbers of new weapons to regain, or to retain in the old case, an enormous superiority. There were people who accepted that missile gap at that time. The point I want to emphasize is that it was not true back then that the United States had no alternatives to the course of military build-up it was pursuing. Kennedy, upon discovering that we had a virtual monopoly, had the option of re-assessing where we were in the world. I'd been spending night and day, 70 hours a week, working on a government contract to avert this imminent Russian surprise attack, or threats based on that capability. I and the people who had told me this, if they were sincere, had an enormously mistaken notion as to what our enemy was up to. Now, the Soviets were not sitting still at all. Actually they built a lot of weapons. They built a lot of weapons within range of Germany it so happened - many more than we predicted, enough to make one large hole of Germany if a war should come, but not one against the United States. Something we had never even considered, which they actually did, was that they would build no missiles against us. Which says you're not just slightly wrong - you must be all wrong about their system of priorities, motivation, and so forth. And also would seem to imply that there were possibilities for taking seriously Krushchev's offer of a comprehensive test ban, which had been proposed by Adlai Stevenson, and sneered at by Eisenhower because Stevenson had said it in 1956, as well as later. Since 1960 and '61 you could well look at that and say, "this man might be serious; he hasn't bought the missiles - maybe he's serious about not entering this race," which he'd not yet done.

Had we accepted a comprehensive test ban on either war-heads or missiles in 1956, '58, or '60, the result would have been no Russian missiles today - or at most, four that didn't work. Had we accepted the comprehensive test ban in 1963, instead of the limited atmospheric test ban that was achieved as a result of the



enormous public pressure - remember Krushchev had been pressing for a comprehensive test ban at that time (we gave in to Pentagon pressure for a limited test ban) - the Russians would have had some 200 missiles - we had several hundred at that time - instead of the 1,400 they now have. Had we accepted a ban on missiles and missile accuracy testing in 1968 when the Russians proposed it, there would today be no Russian MIRVs, no multiple warheads which now threaten our Minutemen. They didn't start testing those till 1973, five years after we did. This was all known to our scientists. They knew that we were four or five years ahead in every one of these cases; and they knew, by the way, that the Russians were almost certain to match us within four or five years. They didn't any longer make this "two decade" mistake. That's the way it's been; the Russians have come along about four or five years later with every development we've had. In effect then, our leaders, Republican and Democrat, have acted on the principle, "We don't care how many missiles the Russians have, as long as we have more and have them sooner." Most Americans don't know this.

In short, it is possible that the Russians, despite their imperial behavior, which was surely evident enough in Hungary and Czechoslovakia but has recently been reaffirmed in Afghanistan, with a potential in Poland, might, nevertheless, act to end the costly and dangerous arms race, which they know threatens them and which threatens us. A "no first use" principle bears on the following point. Our NATO plans from the beginning have been based on a first use threat. Reagan is following in Carter's footsteps with his plan for protecting the Middle East oil from possible Russian aggression by planting U.S. troops there, part of the rapid deployment force that Carter started, but clearly fewer than needed to stop the Russians on the ground without using nuclear weapons. "Would this be, then, a bluff?" his interviewer asked him. "No," said Reagan. "If the Russians moved against that force, they would know they were raising the risk and incurring the likelihood of World War III." It would not be the Russians who would fulfill that warning by initiating nuclear war in that area where they would outnumber us twenty to one in non-nuclear forces. How many people heard that quote?

A year earlier, on the front page of the New York Times, and I think in the San Francisco Chronicle, Carter was saying the same thing, and in particular, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown was saying that we are ready to use nuclear weapons in defense of the Carter Doctrine and in defense of the rapid deployment force. And the administration was deliberately leaking -- how many remember this headline: "Secret Pentagon Study on Russian Supremacy"? Anybody remember this? It caught my attention.

Here's the first paragraph in the New York Times, February 2, 1980: "A secret Defense Department report on the military situation in the Persian Gulf region has concluded...(this was a top secret report, the most comprehensive study, according to the Pentagon, ever done on the options in the Persian Gulf)..."



that the American forces could not stop a Soviet thrust into Northern Iran, and that the United States should thus consider using tactical nuclear weapons in any conflict there, which he had recommended."

How did Burt, of the New York Times, who's now in the Reagan administration, the State Department, and who was close to Brzezinski, get this study? It was obviously given to him by Brzezinski's staff. February 2nd was a few days after the Carter Doctrine was announced. I notice that no one was indicted for 115 years for releasing this top secret study, from which I infer that Carter wanted it understood that he had this study in his hands before he made the Carter Doctrine commitment. A week before the speech, the L.A. Times had printed, and again it was on the front page of the San Francisco Chronicle, the headline, as I recall, that went like this: Dooms Day Talk in Washington. Anyone remember that one? Interestingly, it was scheduled before the Carter Doctrine speech, because the intent was to say precisely this: "High White House officials say that we understand we cannot stop the Russians without using nuclear weapons, and therefore we are prepared to use nuclear weapons." And Stanford students reacted so fast to that they had a rally set up in a few days, before the Carter Doctrine speech, which also mentioned the draft. But I emphasize the timing. I was impressed that those students scheduled that rally as an anti-"nuclear first use" rally before the draft was mentioned; and that did not surprise me. I think the youth of this country now, as before, is sensitive to issues of survival far beyond its own interest in avoiding a draft. And by the way, there were as many women in that rally (as there were in the anti-war movement during Vietnam) as men. And again, long before the President raised this possibility of women being drafted.

The President was trying to tell us something in this case. Oddly, a lot of people didn't hear it. I can't full explain that, but it was pretty explicit. He was not, again stating a new policy, although the people thought he was.

There have been many other occasions on which threats to initiate nuclear war have actually been made. I'll just list them. Most of these, with the exception of the Cuban Crisis and the Berlin Crisis, were highly secret at the time. They are all researchable now, in open sources, including presidential memoirs, although I find that almost no Americans are aware of them.

Harry Truman in 1946 tells us that he gave an ultimatum to the Russians to get them out of northern Iran, that he would drop the bomb on them in 48 hours if they did not do it; and that threat was successful.



In 1948 we sent nuclear bombers to England for the first time in connection with threats over the Berlin blockade.

In 1950 Harry Truman publicly made threats of nuclear weapons when Marines were surrounded at the Chosin Reservoir in Korea. They weren't dropped, perhaps because the Marines fought their way out; they didn't have to use the weapons.

In 1953 Eisenhower records in his memoirs (and almost no Americans are aware of this fact), that he made explicit, secret threats to the Chinese that he would use nuclear weapons on China (not might use them, but would use them) if they did not meet his terms at Panmunjom. They met his terms. Eisenhower didn't use nuclear weapons on people, but he did use them. And I make that distinction, because I want to make the point that he was using nuclear weapons when he made that threat, and clearly saw himself as such, just as Truman used them when he made the threat in 1946. He was using them in '48, using them not as he had done at Hiroshima, but using them as a gun is used when you point it at a person's head in a direct confrontation in order to affect her/his behavior. You're using that weapon.

This pattern is the explanation for why the weapons have been brought to the number we have and why we're buying more. Not because they generate jobs and profits, although that is also a reason. But because they've been used in the past, and they expect to be used in the future in similar ways. Reagan and Carter have been using them the last 12 months to affect Russian behavior in the Middle East.

Eisenhower believed that his threats were successful and, critical in 1953. Naturally, when you believe you've had successes of that sort, you keep on using them. He did go on. In 1954 he offered the French three nuclear weapons in defense of their troops when they were surrounded at Dienbienphu, Indochina, a very secret offer at the time; but it has been revealed since. It wasn't pulled off because the French rejected them; it was too close to their troops, and they didn't want to use them against China.

It was Dulles, of course, who was probably associated more than any other individual with these threats of massive retaliation, which we're hearing again, explicitly. They were thought to be bluffs. And it should also be understood what we didn't know on the outside at the time, that threats were being made in a context, not of imminent Russian superiority - as we were told, and which made it sound like a bluff - but of their awareness of a total monopoly of power on our side, which is why the Russians knew it was not a bluff (if they needed more evidence after Hiroshima and Nagasaki). So the threats succeeded.



In 1958, Eisenhower, by secret threats and readiness to use nuclear weapons (very extensively documented in a formerly top secret study, now declassified) caused the Chinese to desist from their artillery blockade at the island of Quemoy offshore.

In 1961, during the Berlin Crisis. Berlin was again in conflict. The Russians did not cut off access to it in the face of these enormous threats. The fallout shelters that Kennedy suggested then were not to protect us in the event of a Russian-initiated surprise attack on this country, with their four ICBMs and their 190 bombers. If there were going to be any missiles falling on this country, and that was unlikely, it was going to be a retaliation from an extraordinarily incompetent first strike by the United States, if any of their missiles had survived that.

In 1962, the Cuban Crisis. I don't need to recall that to you.

In 1968 Marines were surrounded at Khe Sanh, and again in Viet Nam. Again, preparations were made and readiness was there if necessary to use nuclear weapons to defend them. That was denied by the White House at the time, but the denial was false. Preparations and recommendations were made by the Joint Chiefs and the other side knew it by many newspaper leaks. The Marines weren't overrun--another success.

In 1969 we had a threat that was not successful. Haldeman has revealed, and it has been confirmed by others in the administration in detail, that Nixon made secret explicit threats of the possible use of nuclear weapons if his terms were not met in 1969. Nixon describes these threats as an ultimatum on November 1, 1969. In this particular case, the enemy did not back down. The weapons, nevertheless, were not used. I think that does not mean that it was a bluff. In any case, we see the pattern of threat being extended.

The failure of that threat to deter or to work in 1969 may reflect the fact that something had changed a good deal since those threats were first made. When they were first made, we not only had a monopoly--and that was true right up to the Cuban Crisis, certainly through the Berlin Crisis--but until the mid '50's we were threatening "atomic" weapons and facing atomic weapons.

In the mid-fifties, followed about four or five years later by the Russians, we changed from A-weapons to H-weapons, that is to thermonuclear weapons. That made quite a difference, and I do have to spend a little time on that, because again, I think even for this select audience, I suspect that it's not too well known.

Here is William Dyess, who is still the Asst. Secretary of State, under Reagan, for Public Affairs, whose job it is to interpret for the public what the President means when he speaks.



In other words, his statements are authoritative for the administration (unless the administration finds they have to deny them). On February 3, 1980, after that Burt article, a couple days after the Carter Doctrine, Dyess was telling the public what the Carter Doctrine meant, on an NBC program called News Makers. He says we do have lots of forces in the Indian Ocean. We do have carriers. And we're not limited to a non-nuclear response. Questioner then says, "In nuclear war are we committed not to make the first strike?" Secretary Dyess replies, "no sir." The questioner was startled. He said, "We could conceivably make an offensive...?" Dyess: "We make no comment on that whatsoever, but the Soviets know that this terrible weapon has been dropped on human beings twice in history - and it was an American President who dropped it both times. Therefore, they have to take this into consideration in their calculations."

The questioner came back to it and said, "Those can be interpreted as rather threatening statements. Is it our policy to threaten the use of nuclear power in this situation?" Dyess: "No, it's not our policy to threaten - I am simply calling attention to a part of history because it was a logical part of the answer." The questioner then said, "part of the other answer to that question is the fact that at the time those presidents used nuclear weapons, we were the only ones that had them." Well, that's one change - yes - but I'm saying another one is that the reference to Hiroshima would be recognized by the Russians, but not by most Americans, to be totally - totally misleading as to the nature of the threat being posed. Because the Russian leadership, having tested thermonuclear weapons themselves, knows the change it made to come into the hydrogen era, ten years after Hiroshima. And that's where we are now. Our weapons are now almost entirely hydrogen weapons.

I discovered actually at that very same Stanford rally, by the reaction of the audience, a couple years ago, that that wasn't a very well known distinction to people. And I even discovered, about the same time, why. In 1953, we were testing what seems to have been the first test of a hydrogen weapon in this country, in Nevada. (I must say Las Vegas would have been a good place to do it - Jimmy the Greek could tell us what our odds of surviving all this was.) The declassified memoirs of one of the members of the Atomic Energy Commission, Gordon Dean, which was top secret at the time, declassified just a couple years ago, gave Eisenhower's reaction at the time, to the concern of the commissioners that this test, which was the largest one yet in the United States, might produce fallout because of the nature of H-weapons - more fallout than before. Perhaps it should be postponed to be conducted in the Pacific. And, if we were to go ahead with it, the question was: what should they say to the public about it? According to his diary (this is now from Atomic Soldiers



by Harold Rosenberg, a book about atomic testing in this country and the effects of it), Dean advised his public relations expert, after talking to the president, that in the meeting with Straus that morning "the president expressed some concern, not too serious, but made the suggestion that we leave "thermonuclear" out of our press releases and speeches. Also "fusion and hydrogen." The President says, Dean told Salisbury, "keep them confused as to fission and fusion."

Question: How many people here, like most other Americans, are still confused as to the difference it makes to have a fission or a fusion bomb? How many people could tell us briefly what difference that makes? Well, raise your hand. This is a select audience because I would say about one out of ten could, and that's high.

Let me make it specific because I think you will now see why I'm saying a new problem came into the world in moral terms in the mid-'50's, even compared to what existed by the end of WWII. First of all, all H bombs use A bombs or Hiroshima/Nagasaki type bombs for a trigger. Every H bomb has a Nagasaki type bomb as its detonator. How many saw the Broken Arrow film that was shown here earlier? Okay, well, it referred to the possible high-explosive explosion when a bomb has an accident and hits the ground, which has happened many times. Its high explosive is necessary to the fission reaction - the atom bomb reaction - it causes implosion of the plutonium and uranium. All these bombs have high explosive in them, which may go off when the bomb hits the ground accidentally, and scatter the plutonium, which is lethal for half a million years.

Roughly, a microgram of it, or several micrograms, is almost sure to cause a cancer if ingested, and half of it remains that lethal for twenty-four thousand years and half of the rest for another twenty-four thousand years, and so on. For half a million years there would be contamination from such a dispersion of the plutonium, even without a full explosion.

But if it goes off as intended, or accidentally, and causes a fission, it is then designed to cause the fusion reaction which can be of indefinite power, depending upon the amount of hydrogen and other materials you use as fuel for this further reaction. The early hydrogen bombs are inevitably large bombs. We now have very small hydrogen bombs - the neutron bomb is a very small hydrogen bomb.

The Nagasaki bomb, which is a fission bomb, was equivalent to twenty thousand tons of TNT in blast power. For that, they had to invent a figure to make it convenient; they say twenty kilitons (twenty thousand tons of TNT equivalent). This is a standard A bomb. That's what we were threatening as late as the



early '50's in those crises. That's what we offered the French, that's what we threatened Korea with and it's what we would have used if we carried out a full nuclear war plan in the early '50's. It would have killed, in that case, tens of millions of people. Sixty million died all together in WWII in six years, and this war would kill tens of millions in a day or two. But it would be in the same range. It would not be a change in the scale of killings necessarily, given the numbers of A bombs we had available.

And the limitation on power of an atom bomb, for technical reasons, is about half a million tons TNT equivalent per bomb, or with the most advanced fission bombs, possibly a million tons.

But there is no limit at all to the power of the H bomb which can be set off by this reaction, depending upon the amount of fuel you put in. The early ones have to be large. To make a small one, I repeat, it takes advanced technology. Thus, as new countries get the H bomb, the early tests and their actual explosive power will be very large, not small. They will not be neutron bombs on a whole.

Some of you saw me on that Broken Arrow program refer to the fact that in January, 1961, there was an accident where a 24-megaton bomb, that's a thermonuclear bomb, was dropped by a B-52 near Goldsboro, North Carolina. That was the standard weapon of the B-52 in those days. We had 650 B-52's in our inventory with about 1,600 such weapons, 24-megaton weapons. We had many thousand 10-megaton weapons for our B-47's.

Now I have to get into ratios a bit. One might say morality is blind to ratios - "one death is the same as many" - and that is true up to a point, maybe. But maybe not, in this new historical context. Because what we're talking about is a new kind of death-providing instrument - quite new. Twenty-four million tons is hard to think about. But you may think in these terms; in WWII as a whole, in all theaters, we dropped 2 million tons of high explosives. The 20,000 on Nagasaki and the 13,000 on Hiroshima was a very tiny percentage of that 2 million tons.

In Vietnam, without using nuclear weapons we were dropping a million tons a year by 1967. That's 50 times 20,000 so that's a Nagasaki a week - every week, for seven and a half million tons.

When I copied the Pentagon papers, it was after the 1968 Tet offensive, which is to say, it was when most people in the country believed the war should be ended. But I knew it wasn't ending, that it was going on, that the bombing was going on. I knew this from my inside contacts in the Nixon administration. I hoped that the Pentagon papers' truths would change people's minds as they had changed mine. I thought I would go to jail forever for releasing them. It didn't work out that way - but I thought I



would, and I was indicted for 115 years so my estimate was not far off. It seemed worth it to me to do that for a chance to help end the war.

At that time we had dropped a WWII and a half - 3.2 million tons of bombs. My objective was to help end the war before we dropped another million tons. That seemed like a large round figure to me - before there was another million tons of bombs dropped. A modest objective, it seemed. Well, I failed at that; we dropped another million and a half or so by 1971 before I put the Pentagon papers out to the newspapers. First I gave them to Senator Fulbright. Two more invasions took place, in Cambodia and Laos. I thought I shouldn't wait any longer. At the time I copied the Pentagon papers, after 3.2 million tons, we had still four and a half million tons to go. More than Johnson had dropped, more than two WWIIs to go. That's what Henry Kissinger dropped by the time he got his Nobel Prize.

In short, we failed for a long time. Certainly I was never led to think that it was not worth trying. It seemed to me that it was worth going to jail for. I got that idea, not from the Pentagon papers and not from my Christian upbringing (I was raised as a Christian Scientist. If I had been raised as a Jew as my grandparents were, I wouldn't have gotten it from that either). I got it from young Americans of the age of the youngest here. They put the idea in my head, "What could I do if I were willing to go to jail for my belief that the war is wrong?" And they put that question in my head the only way you can put it in someone else's head; by risking jail yourself. They went to jail; not thinking they would end the war, thinking just as I did, that they were doing something that might help wake somebody else up. Not just to the facts, but to the moral aspects of the situation - we were bombing this country for no good reason, with no prospect of any success of any meaningful sort.

You shouldn't kill people on that basis. I wasn't a pacifist, obviously, in the Marines. I wasn't a pacifist when I volunteered to go to Vietnam. In a strict sense, I'm not a pacifist now. There is a much narrower moral framework that most people have gotten from a Christian Church. You don't kill people except for a very good reason; you don't kill more of them than can possibly be justified. That sounds ludicrously far from the pacifist framework. You don't kill "too many" people for a given reason; and you don't kill this many people for any reason. That may sound awfully permissive, but it ruled out what we were actually doing. The moral question was, what should you do about that? And as I say, I learned what I should do from young Americans who learned it from other adults who had learned it from Martin Luther King, who learned it from Gandhi and others.

And by the way, Martin Luther King did not learn it from his study of the Bible. If you look at Stride Toward Freedom,



which had a great influence on me, you will find that he traces his genealogy of thought in it very closely. He writes that he had come to the conclusion that the Sermon on the Mount was only for personal relations conduct - it had no social implications. Then he read Gandhi and realized that Gandhi had an insight about how to bring large numbers of people into accord with their basic conscientious beliefs and help them to be powerful and effective without threatening violence, without violating the Sermon on the Mount. And that insight, plus his direct contact with Rosa Parks, who challenged him that this was a way of life that could be acted on by someone like himself, led him to accept leadership of the bus boycott, his first militant action. For me it was the same; I read Gandhi, I read King, and then I met people who were going to jail and made it real to me.

In the end, such people, millions of them ended the war against the desires and interests of the presidents of the most powerful nation on earth. This, by the way, is the same power that is being shown today, at much greater risks, but not less effectiveness, by the people of Poland in confronting their Communist party regime, an example of using power at enormous risks in a police state. It does not have less power in our own country, where it doesn't take as much courage. So the war got ended, finally.

The bomb that was accidentally dropped near Goldsboro, North Carolina in 1961, was three Vietnams in one bomb. We dropped 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  million tons on Vietnam. This bomb was equivalent in blast alone to 24 million tons. That's 12 WWII's in one bomb. What Nixon was threatening initially was nuclear weapons of only Hiroshima size, but in a world where the Russians now had as many large megaton weapons as we did, he would have to hope the Russians didn't reply. If they did, we would try to keep them from replying excessively, by threatening or, if necessary, by carrying out larger strikes, which Nixon was prepared to do.

SAC was on alert during this period. That's what SAC is for. It has always been for making the world safe for our initiation of tactical nuclear warfare, a prospect which backs up, and which thus makes the world safe for, our use of American interventionary forces thousands of miles from our shore, where they may get surrounded and require tactical nuclear weapons for their "defense."

SAC is not for El Salvador; it's for El Salvador's thousands of miles away, like in the Middle East or the Far East or Africa. That's what SAC is for - to protect an expeditionary force (or NATO forces) by threatening a U.S. strategic first strike in case lesser threats fail and have to be carried out. If they are carried out (and this is now a moral risk taken by this very threat), the effect will be genocidal regionally, even if it is totally contained in that region. And, of course, the hope is that it will



be genocide far from our shores. But during that era of the fifties, the plans which Eisenhower recurrently threatened to carry out underwent a change. They came to be based on the thermonuclear weapons.

I wrote for the Kennedy administration its first top secret guidelines for the conduct of nuclear wars, specifically, the guidance for the annual top secret operational plans for the United States of America for general nuclear war with the Soviet Union. The plans themselves, of course, were done by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and SAC; but their detailed guidance was laid out actually by me under direction from Secretary McNamara.

In that context I had full access to the existing plans, which we were trying to change in some respects. I drafted a question for the President as to how many humans would be killed in the Soviet Union and China, alone, if their plans were carried out as planned. By the way, the purpose of the question was a bureaucratic one. I thought it would reveal that they had never calculated that, and that that would be a basis for further studies. They answered in detail right away. They gave a chart as to how many would die immediately and as months went by, from fallout in Russia and China, alone. The figure within a few months was 325 million people. This was when the Russians had four ICBMs. This figure was only for a first strike, not a retaliatory plan. It was not for a first strike in the event of a Russian attack on NATO; it was for a first strike in the event of a wide range of circumstances throughout the world--Cuba, Iran--fighting Russians anywhere. 325 million did not include the people who would die from fallout, who were not involved in the conflict between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, which might have started in Iran or Afghanistan or Cuba, and which led to our first strike. Finland would be wiped out by fallout from our attacks in the Leningrad area without a single warhead falling on Finland. Likewise, Austria (another neutral country), Yugoslavia, Japan, would be wiped out by fallout: as Haldeman mentions in his book, by the way. That's still true today.

Given the attacks in the satellite countries as well, the return attacks on West Europe by the Russians (they couldn't have attacked the U.S.), the total figure would have to be something like 600 million people. How many of those would be soldiers? The just war theory is based centrally on the distinction between noncombatants and armed military men. The laws of war in our own manuals, which reflect that just war theory, say that to kill even an enemy soldier who offers to surrender and has laid down his arms is murder. It is a war crime, but it also is straight murder. It can be tried by domestic court, a military court, Supreme Court, international court, or anybody. That's killing a soldier who has been in combat.

Originally, wars were permissible to Christians only to the extent that "just means" were used, which required, as far as possible, a commitment to threatening and killing only military men.



What percentage of the 600 million would be military, and what percentage would be noncombatants? Very obviously, almost all of them would be civilians--women, children, old people--the kind of people who were mainly killed by our bombing in Vietnam. Those 10 ton bombs or even 750 pound bombs, if dropped in populated areas, kill mainly noncombatants. And that was a moral choice that we made before Hiroshima, going back to '42 and '44.

Atom bombs in populated areas have to kill mostly civilians. The killing of civilians, by the way, is defined, for political purposes, if it's deliberate, as terrorism. Bombing non-combatants is called terror bombing. Whether it's a grenade in a restaurant or bombing cities, it's terrorism.

Killing 600 million people in one thermonuclear attack is hard to call war. Calling it a "just war" is, of course, out of the question. But that's clear even with far smaller totals of dead in very limited areas that would involve only tiny little atom bombs.

This plan aimed at targets in cities. There are 218 cities over 100,000 population in Russia. This plan targeted all of those. And all 218 can be attacked right now by a single Poseidon submarine which can carry 224 warheads, each several times the size of the Hiroshima bomb. And we have 31 Poseidon submarines!

At any time, 20 to 30 Poseidon and Polaris submarines are at sea where the Russians can't get any of them, not one. Every one could threaten every large city in Russia. The Minutemen Missiles, which also have nothing to do with the deterrence of an attack on this country, and never did, in contrast are not invulnerable to Russian detection and destruction. If we gave them up immediately, right now, which is a good idea for lots of reasons, especially given their vulnerability, it would not affect deterrence of an attack on our country at all. That obviously also goes for the Trident, the MX, and everything whose purpose is nothing other than to threaten to destroy Russian missiles in their silos before they are launched. That is why these high accuracy warheads with large yields have been designed nearby here at Livermore and at Los Alamos, on the campuses of the University of California. Whatever the people who design those think they are doing - and they can lie to themselves as I lied to myself for a long time in this business - they are not in the business of deterring a nuclear attack on this country. They are in the business of backing up threats of initiation of nuclear war.

That threat, of course, is not a threat of a just war. It can't be. In fact, it transcends, in its violation of just war criteria, anything that was ever imagined. It simply was not physically possible to violate the just war theory that radically until 20 years ago. The theory should have brought into question,



much earlier, the war machines of imperialism that are thousands of years old, in a way that the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ, evidently did not do effectively. But it didn't. It would seem that the notion of "just wars," acceptability of war, and the imperialism that it supports, needs conceptual re-examination in the most fundamental way in the era when war comes to mean nothing but terrorism on a scale never before imagined. You can think of war in this era as nothing but My Lais on a scale of a million, Hiroshimas on a scale of a thousand, Holocausts on a scale of 100. 600 million deaths is 100 Holocausts.

I was going to spend time answering the amazing question that came to me in 1961: How did we come to this? How did my colleagues that I drank beer with, that I worked with, that I respected, that I joked with--how did they come to design a plan for destroying 600 million beings?

It's not easily answered, but it comes from our strategic bombing doctrine of the Second World War, applied automatically to the use of atomic weapons and then thermonuclear weapons. The atomic weapons in small numbers didn't change the scale of destruction, which was already terroristic and genocidal. The H bombs did change it, however, by a factor of a thousand or so. And the planners just inserted these new weapons in the old plans. That's the basic answer in a nutshell.

There are other questions. Anthropological: Who are these guys? What is their religion? What do they worship? What do they believe in? What do they think is worth dying and killing for? Moral questions, obviously, and less obviously, in my opinion, theological questions. Theology has to do in part with the nature and function of humanity, our purpose. What are we here for? What larger design do we serve? Where do we fit in some larger process of mind and purpose. How do we relate to the cosmos? And really, even people who don't have a personal notion of God, or maybe any notion of God, do have a theology in that sense. As my grandfather used to say, as my father told me (my grandfather was a Jewish atheist), "No one has no god. God is what you worship--who you serve. Everybody serves something." What is the god of the people who designed these plans, and of those who support them and have managed not to find out exactly what they are or to do anything about them? It is fairly evidently not the God represented by the Sermon on the Mount.

And what do they regard as anti-God, as evil? Recently we have been focussed by our most respected leaders on the evil of Russian aggression in the Persian Gulf region, a real possibility. Russians have committed aggression in Afghanistan, and they could do it elsewhere. The issue is our interest in oil, a real interest, not an illusory one. To protect that interest, the "evil" of losing control of the distribution by the Seven Sisters over the distribution of oil in the Middle East, we propose to prevent that by killing millions of people to start with, with the likelihood of killing hundreds of millions later.



Does that mean then that our Christian churches, inevitably, following the Sermon on the Mount, find themselves in absolute, total opposition to that policy? Or are they part of the problem?

It seems unmistakable to me that our churches have been supporting, encouraging, totally tolerating, and really legitimating, by their position, that current and past policy. Is that a state of grace? Or a state of sin? Or what is it?

There are some Christian churches that are pacifist. They are often called sects. I find them - the Quakers, Mennonites, Church of the Brethren - greatly represented in nonviolent civil disobedience actions, as at Rocky Flats--along with some Catholics and Protestants--who it would seem are in trouble generally with their own hierarchy. (Although the hierarchy can learn.)

Our predicament today even raises the question: Who is the God who let this come to be? How are we to understand this situation? Without prejudging that, we can just look at the prospect where our president, like his predecessors (he's just more candid than them; his policy is not different) can say that if the Russians do such and such, I may (I'm paraphrasing here) launch World War III. He can say that and receive no challenge from anyone. He may do that, and it will have been done with our taxes and our compliance and our scientists' sons and daughters and our sons and daughters in the Rapid Deployment Force, with the nuclear tripwire, when we may or may not have sent off willingly. Is this what our Father in heaven wanted from us? Is this what He had in mind? If it isn't (I've never discussed this in public before, but I'm taking advantage of this opportunity), what happened? What's going on? If it is, it defines a God that I would have to be in resistance to. I find that the God in the Bible, in the early books, Exodus, Joshua, I and II Kings, disconcertingly, is a god of slaughter. That may be the god to whom our society prays. And the idol of that god is surely the Bomb.

The Buddhists talk of the Three Refuges: "I find my refuge in the Buddha, in the Dharma, the way, and in the Buddhist community." What do we take refuge in, other than the bomb? Is that not our sanctuary--our refuge--our shield and buckler? And who gave it to us? The god that made it possible and supplied the insight, ie, it is a god, could it be something other than demonic? The Gnostics maybe deserve another look. The theory of some of them was that the God of this earth was a lesser diety: of demonic nature.

But there's another possibility. That is that the "peace churches" deserve another look. They have the peculiar idea, like most churches, that their Christianity is more orthodox, really, than the others; it is based on a close reading of the Sermon on the Mount and on the Gospels. I have been reading quite seriously



about them because of my feelings that "orthodox" Christianity is part of the problem. I've been encouraged not only to follow the witness of the Mennonites, the Church of the Brethren, the Quakers, but to read, as they encourage you to do, the New Testament and the Sermon on the Mount. They ask, "Are we wrong? Are we wrong in the way we read this?" The pre-Constantinian church, which, as not every Christian seems to know, was in practice determinedly pacifist and willing to die for that, seems to have been based on a pretty good reading of Jesus' message, as far as I can see. In other words, it seems to me that all of us here should consider very seriously the hypothesis that the position of the "peace churches" on these matters has been, after all, simply...right. (And not only on the issue of violence, but on the merit of the poor.)

Reagan's use of what he called, quoting TR, "the bully pulpit" of the White House seems to me to preach against the Sermon on the Mount in all of its aspects, particularly as it has to do with the poor. He didn't invent that un-Christ-like religion, but it didn't keep him from getting into the White House. It is the religion that this country has accepted--a religion of state worship, a religion of hierarchy, social hierarchy, a religion of rule of the world by the elect, and the willingness to undertake or support endless, endless, endless violence to maintain that dominance, that status quo, an unjust status quo.

Do we have the resources within ourselves, as human beings and as Americans, to be heretics to that religion of the state? Can we dissent from that--protest that--on the basis of our conscience? Where can we find the strength to do that? It is to be found by a reading of the Bible, informed by conscience. I don't find it in Joshua, but I do find it in the Sermon on the Mount. And if the Sermon on the Mount's "resist not evil," seems too extreme for people who live in this world, consider a somewhat less restrictive rule. If "thou shalt not kill" can be modified to mean, "except when ordered by competent political authority" (that's what it means in our practice, right?), then how about a less conditional but narrower rule: "Thou shalt not slaughter under any circumstances at all?" Thou shalt resist the process of massacre with all your heart and mind and soul. Thou shalt not tell lies and keep secrets that keep humanity in a trap that leads to omnicide, under any conditions. And thou must be willing to suffer (if that's called for, and it will be), rather than take part in this murderous process.

Does it take a nation of heroes to follow such rules? That would be hard to hope for. I don't think so actually. I think the Poles, for instance, right now who are acting with great risk - I don't think they're that different from us.

Do we have the resources to act in this way, if necessary: nonviolently, as Gandhi said, and as the Poles are doing with



powerful effect? I think so; and such resources can be found, I say, in the Christian tradition that all Christian churches share, whether they live up to it or not.

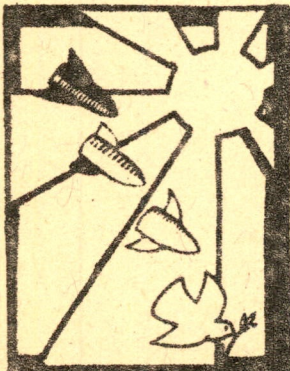
It comes down to taking seriously the process--work for a freeze--no more weapons--30,000 is enough, 50,000 in the world is enough. That's a modest goal. That doesn't solve the problem, obviously. You have to go from there, but you will not go down in the inventories of weapons till you stop going up. Our country must be willing to stop. Also, "no first use"; merely putting into effect what most Americans think our policy is already, but doing this against the will of United States presidents, and perhaps of others.

There are other things that I could talk about, but the point that I want to make for this audience is that turning the arms race around takes the "conversion" not only of our own hearts, in terms of our action, but of our churches.

\* \* \*

Sections of this address are adapted from an interview with the speaker published in pamphlet form under the title "Nuclear Armaments," by The Conservation Press, Berkeley, 1980. For copies of the pamphlet write to Box 201, 2526 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, California 94704.

Also available are copies of this transcript for a \$1.00 donation (\$.50 each, ten or more), from the Center for Peacemaking, 5701 Thornhill Drive, Oakland, Ca. 94611. Hours: WED-FRI, 9 AM-NOON  
Phone: 339-1749.



The Center for Peacemaking is a program of Northern California Presbyterians for Peace and Justice and the Montclair Presbyterian Church Plowshares Committee.



